

Childs likely to start at I-back Saturday

From Staff Reports

With all the controversy surrounding the Nebraska I-back position, senior Clinton Childs may have quietly slipped into a starting spot.

Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne said Wednesday that the 6-foot, 215-pounder probably would start at I-back Saturday in Nebraska's home opener Saturday against Arizona State.

No. 2 I-back Damon Benning is expected to play despite his pulled hamstring injury, which has kept him from going full speed in practice.

Childs, who missed the opener against Oklahoma State because of disciplinary reasons, rushed for a career-high 85 yards on eight carries against Michigan State last Saturday. The senior from Omaha averaged 10.4 yards a carry. Osborne said he would announce

the starting quarterback Thursday, though senior Tommie Frazier has been back at practice for two consecutive days after he suffered a deep thigh bruise against the Spartans.

Brook Berringer replaced Frazier against Michigan State and threw for 106 yards, including a 51-yard pass to Reggie Baul. Berringer directed six scoring drives.

NU's Baul patiently hones skills; hard work spurs stellar stats

By Vince D'Adamo
Staff Reporter

Reggie Baul just wanted a chance to prove himself, and the Cornhusker senior split end said he had waited his turn.

After sitting out his first two seasons, Baul finally stepped on to the practice field in 1993.

"I feel like I've been patient," Baul said. "I came in with a lot of people. But guys like myself, Barron Miles, Christian Peter and Dwayne Harris stuck it out."

Every team looks for veteran leadership, and Baul wants to set a prime example for the younger players. Baul said former Husker receiver Corey Dixon taught him a lot. Baul is also passing his knowledge of the game to young players like Kenny Cheatham.

In Nebraska's offensive system, which emphasizes the Husker running game, receivers are expected to block.

"I tell them the same thing that Corey told me," Baul said. "Just be patient and good blocking will pay off."

Nebraska receivers coach Ron Brown said downfield blocking was a must in Nebraska's offensive scheme.

"If playing time and winning football games are not incentives for a receiver to block here," Brown said, "then something's wrong. That's the way it has to be for the offense to function."

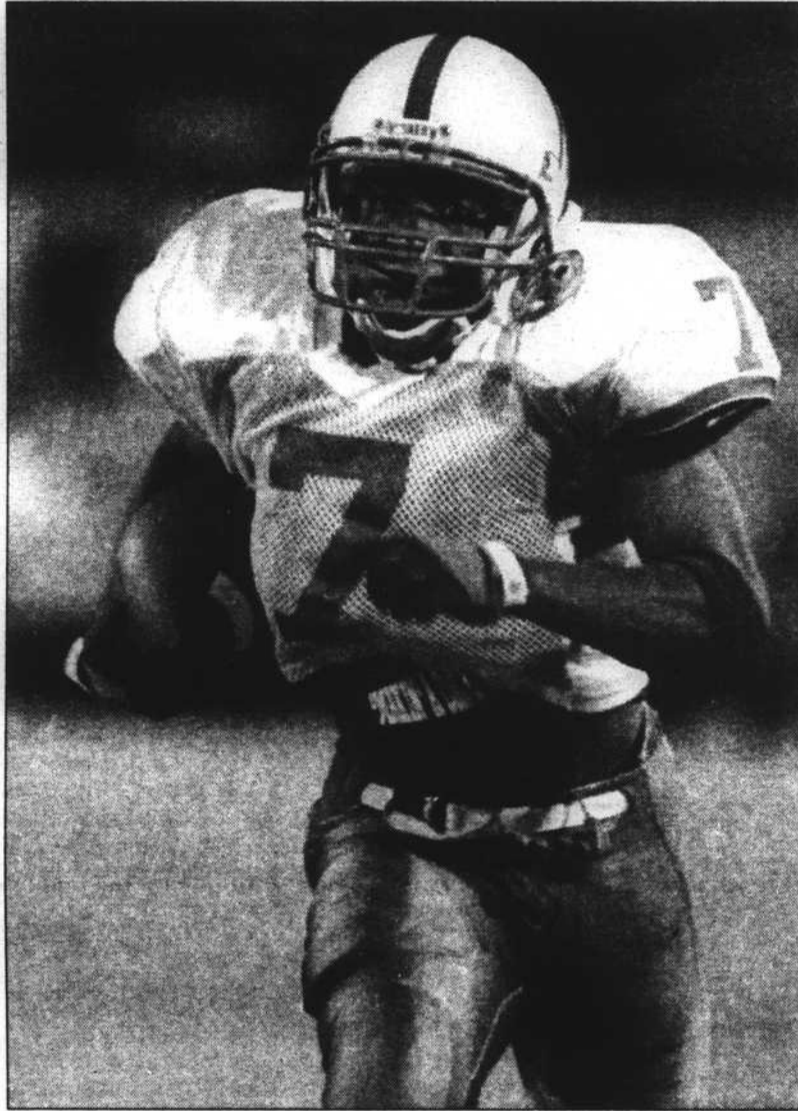
Although a great downfield block does not show in box scores, Baul said the defense sometimes let up.

"When you're doing all that blocking, the defense starts to forget about me, and it's easier to get deep," Baul said.

That's what happened against Oklahoma State in the Huskers' season opener. Baul broke loose in the third quarter for his only reception of the night. The 76-yard catch was topped off with a touchdown. And that's what happened against Michigan State, when Baul hauled in a 51-yard pass from Brook Berringer.

Brown has told Baul many times that it takes more than natural ability to be a successful player.

"I tried to instill that work ethic is very important," Brown said. "Reggie needed to understand that running by people was not enough. He had to learn how to change speeds, run routes and hustle. He has shown great im-



Jon Waller/DN

Nebraska's Reggie Baul runs downfield after a catch against Oklahoma State. Baul has caught just two passes, but he's averaging 63.5 yards a catch.

provement."

After the Huskers defeated Miami in the Orange Bowl last January, Baul knows the team cannot bask in the glow of glory. He also knows playing the Huskers is every opponent's big game.

"We have to work that much harder," he said. "Everybody's watching us, so we have to come ready to play every week."

In the Huskers' 64-21 thumping of Oklahoma State, Baul was penalized for excessive celebrating because he held his arm out after scoring a touchdown.

Baul said the NCAA rules com-

mittee had pushed the rule too far.

"I think it's taking the fun out of the game," Baul said.

But Baul is just having fun playing football this year without the controversy off the field that plagued him last year.

Last November, Baul was accused of stealing a wallet in a restaurant. The charges were eventually dropped. Despite the swirling rumors, Baul caught 17 passes for 300 yards and three touchdowns.

"I just tried to stay focused on football," Baul said. "It taught me to walk away from a situation. I see myself doing that more now."

Quality cross country runners able to face challenging season, opponents

By Brian Jensen
Staff Reporter

Despite facing a very tough schedule against nationally-ranked opponents, Nebraska cross country coach Jay Dirksen says that both his men's and women's teams have some quality runners who will be able to compete.

On the women's side, Nebraska has lost just one senior off its starting squad who placed second at the Big Eight and NCAA District V Championship meets last season.

The Husker women have an excellent chance of improving on their 16th-place finish at last season's NCAA Championships with six of its seven starters returning.

"We have a lot of depth on this team," Dirksen said. "We're still try-

ing to see who our No. 1 runner will be. Right now, Sherri Bonsall, Sherri Elwood, Christina Blackmer and Nora Shepherd and a few others could all compete for the spot."

The Husker women will have to compete with some quality opponents this season. Colorado, last year's No. 4 finisher, along with No. 18 finisher Kansas could give Nebraska a tough time in the Big Eight.

"Our season goal is toward winning the Big Eight and qualifying for the NCAAs," Dirksen said. "Conference wise, we have a lot of work to do. It's kind of early to tell what will happen."

Meanwhile, the younger men's team also returns a number of strong, yet untested runners. The team will be led by captain Brady Bonsall, along with Balazs Tolgyesi, Banti Itteff, David Olson and freshman Luke

Petricca. "We have about three to four proven athletes on this team and a bunch of others who can do well. We're kind of an unknown quantity right now," Dirksen said.

The men's schedule will be very competitive, though. This year they will face Iowa State, last year's national champion, second-place finisher Colorado, and No. 11 finisher Oklahoma State.

"Our conference will be tough with those three teams," Dirksen said.

Dirksen said that the teams had been putting in a number of miles this year. Men have been running 50 to 90 miles a week; women have run 40 to 80 miles a week. He said that more specific race workouts wouldn't begin until after the Woody Greeno/Nebraska Invitational this weekend.

Commissioner likes chances for final game in Astrodome

HOUSTON (AP) — Big 12 Commissioner Steve Hatchell inspected the Astrodome Wednesday as a possible site for the expanded football league's championship game in 1996, KRIV-TV of Houston reported.

"I think our chances are good," AstroDome-USA President Carl Marsalis told the television station. "We're probably cocky. I think we're going to get part of this championship game. Will we get it every year?"

I don't know."

Hatchell, former commissioner of the Southwest Conference, was joined in his tour by current SWC Commissioner Kyle Kallander and athletic directors Bob Bockrath of Texas Tech, Bob Frederick of Kansas and Donnie Duncan of Oklahoma.

Marsalis said the group also planned to inspect playoff sites at Dallas, Kansas City, Mo., and St. Louis.

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